

Supports the Nomination of Acting Secretary Russell Redding of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

December 11, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC— Today, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) wrote to Agricultural Secretary Tom Vilsack requesting that Pennsylvania have at least one representative on the Dairy Advisory Committee the Secretary is forming.

"As you finalize the selection process for the members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Dairy Advisory Committee, I strongly request that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania – its farms and citizens -- be represented in that body. As you know, Pennsylvania is the fourth largest milk producer and fifth largest dairy state in the nation and has both large and small farms, averaging 75 cows per farm, serving as a representative sample of the dairy industry nation-wide."

Congressman Sestak also wrote in support of the nomination of Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Acting Secretary Russell Redding to the committee.

Earlier this year, Secretary Vilsack announced the formation of the committee as part of a continuing effort to listen to and respond to the needs of producers in the dairy industry.

Congressman Sestak is a member of the Dairy Caucus in the House of Representatives.

Text of the letter is below:

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack

Secretary

U.S. Department of Agriculture

1400 Independence Ave, S.W.

Washington, DC 20250-0002

As you finalize the selection process for the members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Dairy Advisory Committee, I strongly request that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania – its farms and citizens -- be represented in that body. As you know, Pennsylvania is the fourth largest milk producer and fifth largest dairy state in the nation and has both large and small farms, averaging 75 cows per farm. It serves as a representative sample of the dairy industry nation-wide.

Acting Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Russell Redding, has the background and experience to be an asset to your Committee. He has a strong understanding of Pennsylvania-specific dairy and agricultural issues and a national prospective having previously served as an agricultural advisor to former Senator Harris Wofford, someone I greatly respect.

As you finalize your appointments to the Committee, I would appreciate your consideration of Acting Secretary Redding as a representative from Pennsylvania. I look favorably upon Acting Secretary Redding's nomination.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warmly,

Joe Sestak

Member of Congress

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in*

*Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.*